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Northampton Mercury

THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2015

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Northampton Mercury

THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2015

BRINGING YOU THE NEWS SINCE 1720

EX-SAINTS STAR TO TELL 'HEARTBREAKING' STORY

SEE PAGE 10

Town shows respect for armed forces

■ Members of the armed forces, including serving troops, veterans and cadets, gathered in Abington Street, before parading through the town towards the Market Square in Northampton, to mark Armed Forces Day on Saturday.

■ Full story and more pictures in this week's Chronicle & Echo.

'SOMEONE'S FOLLOWING ME'

TEENAGER'S TEXT TO FRIEND JUST MINUTES BEFORE TERRIFYING SEX ASSAULT

By Paul Lynch
Reporter
paul.lynch@jpress.co.uk

A girl who was seriously sexually assaulted in Northampton texted a friend "oh my God, I'm sure someone's following me" minutes beforehand.

Northamptonshire Police has renewed its appeal to find a sex attacker who assaulted a 14-year-old girl in the Goldings area on Thursday, May 28, during BBC One's Crimewatch Roadshow, broadcast from Rockingham Speedway.

As part of the show a five-minute video reconstruction of the attack contained an interview with the victim's mother, voiced by an actress.

In it the mother said her daughter had been to a friend's house on the fateful night before getting the bus home.

It was when getting off the bus, shortly after 9pm, that the young victim noticed a man following her.

"She was texting her friend at the time and said, 'Oh my God somebody's following me," the mother said.

The Crimewatch reconstruction then described how the teenage victim chose to take a "quicker route to safety" along a pathway between Lings Way and East Butterfield Court to a friend's house, as it would have been closer than her home.

But the attacker, described as bald, five feet two inches tall, with a closely shaven head and a distinctively large nose, followed her as she headed along the pathway which police have described as a "densely wooded area."

The show revealed how the teenager took steps to evade the man following her by hiding in a area of "undergrowth" of the woods by the footpath for a short time, and believed the man had walked on by.

But when she emerged from her hiding place, the man appeared in front of her and subjected her to a serious sexual assault.

During the programme, the mother revealed the lasting effect the attack has had on the family. She said: "I felt cold, I felt sick, the bottom just dropped out of my life."

And referring directly to her daughter she said: "I don't think she has slept properly for a while. How could anyone do that? She is 14 for heaven's sake."

Speaking on the Crimewatch Roadshow, the officer leading the investigation, Detective Chief Inspector Martin Kinchin, said the attacker is believed to have connections to the Goldings area.

He said: "We think he is going to have links to that area, either living there or knowing someone in the area."

Police released an e-fit of the suspect on June 2.

Anyone who has any information is asked to call 101, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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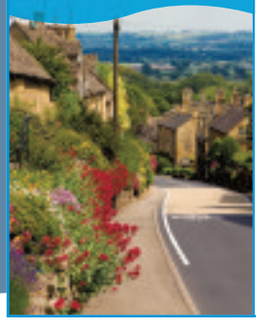

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ABTA

Reader Travel

The best of the best of county food and drink

Holdenby House was the setting for one of the judging sessions and is holding its food fair in September where you can try shortlisted products

Food producers from Northampton, Towcester, Brackley, Spratton and Sulgrave are among the finalists in the Northamptonshire Food and Drink Awards.

The products that have reached the finals include, chocolates, fruit cake, apple juice and marmalade.

The Awards, devised by Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP) and now in their seventh year, are aimed at celebrating all that is great about local produce and drink and recognising excellence within the county's dining venues.

They are sponsored by Carlsberg UK.

They are (in alphabetical order within the category):

Artisan Sweet Product of the Year (sponsored by Moulton College):

- Amaretti Tiffin - The Corner Deli & Sandwich Shop, Kettering
- Cornish Sea Salted Caramels - Belflair Chocolates, Brackley
- Fruitilicious Granola with Nuts and Seeds - Most Marvellous Baking, Northampton
- Rich Fruit Cake - Elliotts Kitchen Fine Foods, Towcester
- Swiss Roll Raspberry Puree Ice Cream Cake - A Rossi and Partners, Kettering

New Local Drink of the Year:

- Bell Ringer – Towcester Mill Brewery, Towcester
- Founder's Reserve East India Pale Ale – Phipps NBC, Northampton
- Plum Cider – Saxby's Cider, Irchester
- Ratliffe's Celebrated Stout – Phipps NBC, Northampton

Artisan Savoury Product of the Year (sponsored by Heygates Flour and Animal Feed):

- Hobnail Goat Cheese – NeneView Dairy, Stanwick
- Nice Try Lamb Pie – Sauls of Spratton, Spratton
- Pastrami – Ashley Farm Shop, Ashley
- Pork, Apple and Black Pudding Scotch Egg – Elliotts Kitchen Fine Foods, Towcester
- Potato, Leek and Stilton Pie – The Moulton Pie Company, Moulton

New Local Product of the Year (sponsored by Whitworth Bros. Ltd Flour Millers):

- Fruitilicious Granola with Nuts and Seeds – Most Marvellous Baking, Northampton
- Middle Eastern Marmalade – Friars Farm, Northampton
- Rapstick Goat Cheese – NeneView Dairy, Stanwick
- Rhubarb and GINger Cake – Most Marvellous Baking, Northampton
- Skyver Goat Cheese – NeneView Dairy, Stanwick

Artisan Local Drink of the Year:

- Apple Juice – Windmill Orchards, Sulgrave
- Becket's Ale – Phipps NBC, Northampton
- Bible Black Porter – Nene Valley Brewery, Oundle
- Booze Hound – Gun Dog Ales, Woodford Halse
- Northamptonshire Bitter – Hoggley's Brewery, Northampton

Winners to be revealed at gala

THE winners and runners-up in all five categories will be decided by a second panel of judges later in the year and the results, along with those of the other 13 categories in the competition, will be announced at the Awards Dinner taking place at Royal & Derngate in Northampton on Thursday, October 15.

Meanwhile visitors to both the Northamptonshire Food Show at Holdenby on Saturday and Sunday September 5 and 6 and the Althorp Food Festival on Friday and Saturday September 25 and 26 will have chance to sample some of the 24 shortlisted products and drinks.

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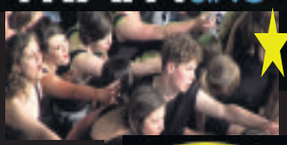

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Dad is inspiration for son's boxing bid

By Nick Spoors
Chief reporter
nick.spoors@jpress.co.uk

A son from Northampton is training for a competitive boxing match after being inspired by his terminally ill father.

Andrew Knight is in training to raise money for Cancer Research UK

Andrew Knight, from Duston, is to take part in the white collar boxing event for people with little or no boxing experience to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

But Andrew is putting all his energy into the event on July 5, as he wants to make his father proud following his diagnosis of lung cancer.

After signing up to The Ultra White Collar Boxing Event at the Park Inn Northampton, the 33-year-old labourer has been given eight weeks to prepare for "the toughest thing I've done in my entire life".

As well as free training at Rough and Ready Gym he is also having extra tutelage at a new club, Dynamite MMA and the new boxing studio in Bunting Road, Northampton.

Andrew said: "Sometimes when I'm training on the bag, I feel I just can't carry on any longer, but then I think of my dad fighting for the rest of his life.

Andrew said: "This is a cruel disease that has a major impact on so many people the statistics show that one in three people are affected with cancer."

Anyone wanting to help Andrew with his fundraising appeal can donate via his Justgiving link:

https://www.justgiving.com/ANDREW-knight10/

Any company that donates a minimum of £50 gets to have their logo featured on Andrew's vest on fight night.

Businesses that are interested can email any questions and send their logo details via the following email address: uwcbknight@outlook.com

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Action plan to stop mums-to-be smoking

The number of women who smoke while pregnant in Northamptonshire is 'significantly worse' than the national average, latest figures reveal.

Northamptonshire has a higher number of pregnant women smoking

The statistics, officially released by the director of public health, show that an average of 1,331 women across the county continue to smoke while pregnant, right up until the end of the pregnancy. This amounts to 15.6 per cent of the pregnant population, compared with 12 per cent nationally.

Broken down, the margin for Northampton and many of the individual districts in the county is around three to four per cent, while the figure for Corby alone shows that one in five pregnant women are smoking.

Northamptonshire County Council has a direct responsibility over the figures, which are categorised as 'significantly worse' than the national average in the report, but does not provide targeted stop smoking support to pregnant women. The council has said that it is currently reviewing the way it provides its general Stop Smoking Service, which is delivered by Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (NHFT).

A council spokesman said: "NHFT currently offers a universal service which means that targeted support to pregnant women is not provided.

"This service, along with many other prevention services, are being reviewed as the county council, NHFT and the University of Northampton work together to form a Wellbeing Community Interest Company (CiC). This new company will concentrate on delivering prevention services to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of Northamptonshire and will be created and become operational during 2015."

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It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Trevor Skidmore feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 10 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service the Northampton, Kettering, Wellingborough & Corby areas and Trevor is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Trevor a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!

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Hospital staff come to ducklings' rescue

By Nick Spoors
Chief Reporter
nick.spoors@jpress.co.uk

The lives of a flock of newly-hatched ducklings were saved by NGH staff after they were discovered trapped without food or water in a hospital garden.

The 11 ducklings hatched at the start of the week and their mother had nested in Willow Garden, an enclosed courtyard garden within the hospital grounds. It provided her with a quiet, secluded spot to care for her eggs, but unfortunately no water or access to food.

Staff spotted the family's plight and the rescue involved transporting duck and ducklings on foot from the hospital to Midsummer Meadow where they were released into the water for the ducklings' first swim. Dr Clare Topping, an energy and sustainability manager, led the rescue effort along with maintenance supervisor, Simon Messinger.

Dr Topping said: "They looked fairly newly hatched so they hadn't eaten anything and unless we could have found a way to get the right food to mum and the ducklings there was a big chance they would have died.Simon carried the mum under his arm and I had the ducklings in a box. As long as she could hear them, she stayed calm."

Last year, Willow garden was given a makeover with the aim of providing patients and staff with a calm environment conducive to the healing process, with plants chosen specifically to provide year-round colour, scent and movement.

It was designed to be wildlife-attracting and among other visitors, staff have noted 10 different species of bees.

Simon Messinger with the ducklings

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Ref: 1691631 Johnston Press Weekly

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Rugby star to reveal all in new biography

By James Bryce
Reporter
james.bryce@jpress.co.uk

The autobiography of Rugby World Cup winner and former Northampton Saints star, Ben Cohen, will be "heartbreaking and inspirational", according to publishers.

The book, out in September, will reveal how Ben coped with the death of his father after he was attacked at a nightclub in Northampton and how he used it as motivation in later life.

Deputy publisher at Ebury Publishing Andrew Goodfellow said it was an inspirational story.

"Ben's story is a heartbreaking tale of an ordinary family ripped apart by a sudden brutal act and how Ben used this unbearable loss as motivation to become what he and his father had always wanted – the best in the world.

"It goes without saying that this is a book about so much more than sport and Ben has had to delve back into some very dark times to tell that story. We are very proud to have it on the Ebury list."

Ben said: "I wanted to work with Ebury to tell the story of my rise to the top of the rugby world.

"The story has a backdrop of family tragedy and it was a difficult story to tell, but I hope to do myself and my family justice with this book."

Former Saints player, Ben Cohen, is publishing his autobiography

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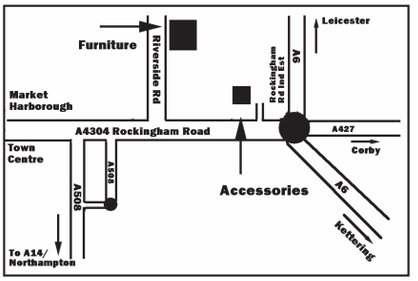

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Blisters and losing toe nails 'worth it'

By James Bryce
Reporter
james.bryce@jpress.co.uk

Two friends from Northamptonshire who trekked 102 miles in three days accompanied by their faithful pet dogs raised £15,000 for two cancer charities.

Peter Walker and Richard Sanders took up the challenge of walking the Cotswold Way to raise money for charity.

"We've been walking together for about 10 years around England and abroad. The Cotswold Way seemed like a suitable challenge and we thought we might as well raise some money at the same time," said Peter, 53.

All began well in Bath when the first 50 miles north were bathed in sunshine.

"The views were fantastic at the summit of each hill so the climb was always worth it," said Peter.

Copious blisters and the loss of four toenails didn't stop Richard, 53, from striding stoically to the finish in Chipping Campden.

Peter Walker and Richard Sanders raised £15,000 for cancer charities

Their faithful four-legged companions Milo and Ruby staged a sit-down protest on day three so were allowed to travel in the back-up team vehicles, ably steered by wives Caroline Walker and Bridget Sanders.

"I'm sure my dad would have been proud of our walk," said Peter.

"He was unaware he had bowel cancer and by the time it was diagnosed it was too late: he only lived six months."

Chief executive of Bowel & Cancer Research, Deborah Gilbert, thanked the pair for their achievement.

"More than 16,000 people die of bowel cancer every year. Our aim is to make sure no one dies of the disease in future and we can only do that with the help of fantastic supporters like Peter and Richard," she said.

Anyone who wants to add to Peter's total can do so at www.justgiving.com/walkerbyname.

To support Richard, www.justgiving.com/richardsblisters

For more information about Bowel & Cancer Research, visit www.bowelcancerresearch.org

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But that sort of fast road fury is expected in a car honed to sit at the top of the Mini performance table, a notch above the already swift Cooper S.

Instead, it was the comfort of this little road rocket that had me reaching for my notebook after the test drive.

Even with the optional, larger 18in alloy wheels on board (part of a £2,470 Chilli pack) this car managed the bumps, ruts and hollows of a typical British road with the firm aplomb you simply don't expect from a car honed on smooth German roads.

Development cars spent time on our roads as the engineers developed the suspension to cope better over here.

It makes this fastest of Minis a real hoot to drive at sane speeds on the sort of surface that has less well sorted sporty machines hopping uncomfortably from ridge to ridge.

That extra £4,000 or so over the Cooper S has been spent going quite deeply into the bits that make the JCW so much fun, from tweaking the turbocharged engine to adding bigger brakes.

I can't ever see an owner approaching the near 50mpg quoted by the car's maker – my brief test recorded 37mpg and I would not expect much more in longer-term use.

Still, that's no mean feat with this much fun on tap.

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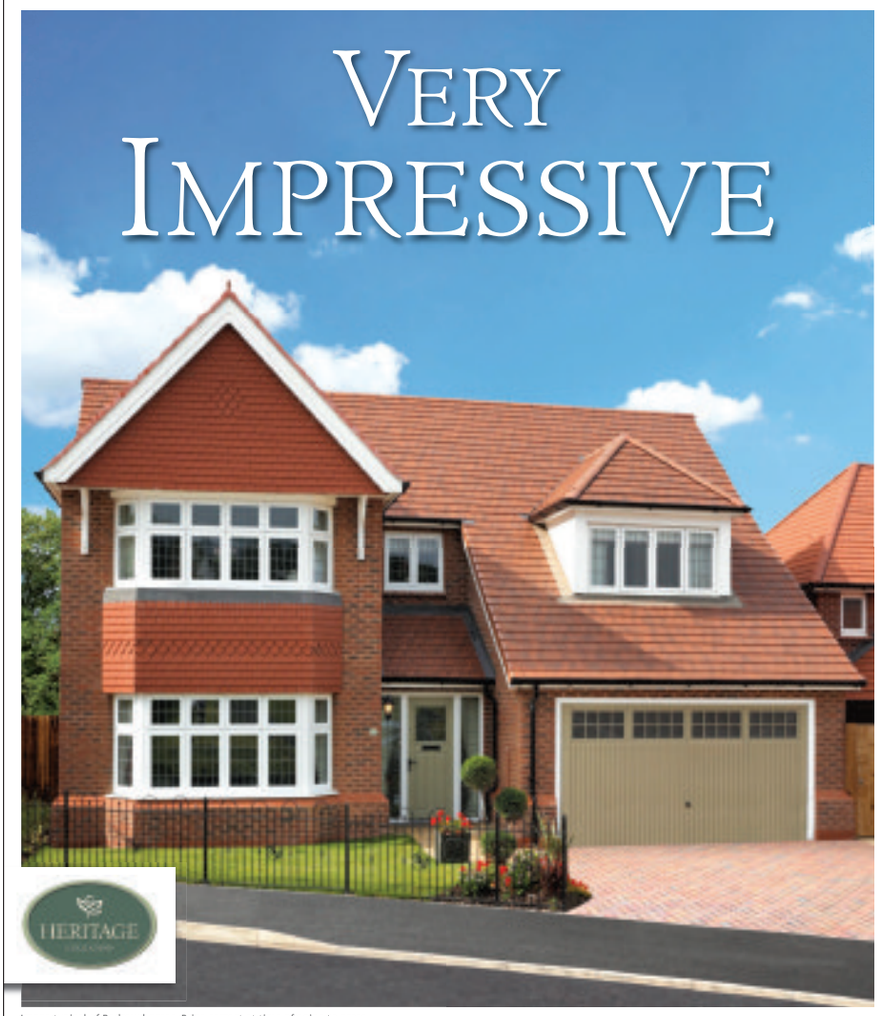

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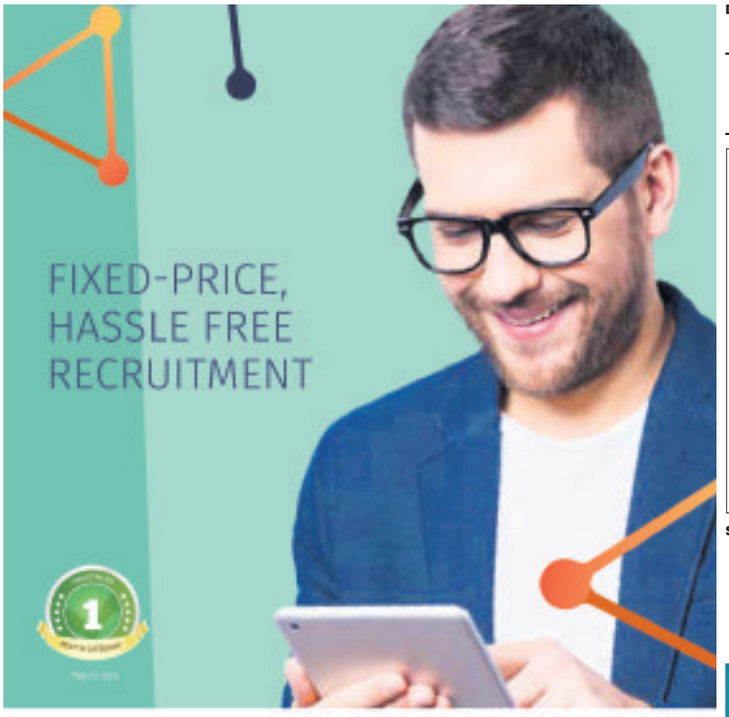

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SPORT

Wilder's total trust in Cardoza

Cobblers boss Chris not concerned by Sixfields takeover talk

FOOTBALL

Cobblers boss Chris Wilder says he has '100 per cent trust' in chairman David Cardoza to make the right decision on the club's future.

Last week, Cardoza revealed that he had agreed to sell his controlling share in the Cobblers to an Indian consortium. He has signed a 'heads of terms agreement' with the party, which has yet to be named.

Wilder was informed of the news by Cardoza and fully believes that it will not have a disruptive effect on his plans for the new season.

Cobblers play their first pre-season match, at Sileby Rangers, on Sunday and the manager has given his full support to Cardoza.

"I've got 100 per cent trust in the chairman and in the decisions he makes," Wilder said. "He's not a selfish person and the reason that I came to the football club was because of that.

"Of course, I came to the football club because of his long-term view and ambition, and he's a really good guy. That's the reason I took the job.

"I had other things, in my situation when I was at Oxford United, and I came here.

"One thing that will always be consistent is the desire to do well for the football club and make the right decision for the football club.

"Whether he's here or he moves on, that is his decision, but I know he won't give it up to anybody that will make the club in a worse position. I fully believe that.

Wilder admits it was a 'difficult situation' for him after hearing the news of a takeover as the possible change of ownership will inevitably bring uncertainty to Sixfields.

But he remains comfortable with how things are going and is focusing on the job in hand.

Wilder added: "It was a difficult situation for me last week because if the news gets broken we, as part of the football club, whether we're staff, whether we're working in the office or working with the players, have to get our heads down and carry on working to the best of our ability.

"As I've said, the chairman will make the right decision for the football club, and he's certainly not a person in my view that will do something just to please him and just to make sure he benefits.

"He wouldn't have spent this amount of time at this football club and the amount of effort and money that he has if he didn't feel a lot about it and he didn't have an affiliation with it.

TOTAL TRUST Cobblers boss Chris Wilder says he believes chairman David Cardoza will always do what is best for the football club

"I'm sure as far as he's concerned he'll do the right thing and I'm very comfortable with that."

And Wilder insists it's business as usual on the playing front as he continues to try to bolster his squad ahead of the start of the new Sky Bet League Two season on August 8.

"The nucleus of the group is there and there to be seen," he said. "We've made some excellent signings, we're very very close on another goalkeeper today, we still recognise that we need to bring another centre-half in, a midfield player and a forward player.

"We're in a situation now where we're looking at players pre-season, they'll be players that turn out for us on Sunday, Tuesday and next Saturday and are trying to earn a contract.

"We've balanced it out that we wanted a good, healthy group but we wanted to leave a few places open for players that haven't got clubs that want to go and earn a contract.

"I had to do that at the back end of my career, when I was 29 or 30 I had to go down to Brighton and try to earn a contract and I did, and we've done that in the past.

"We did it with Lawson (D'Ath) last year, and what an absolutely fantastic find he's turned out to be, so there'll be players floating about.

"It doesn't mean that as soon as they pull a shirt on we're going to sign them but we're going to have a long look at them."

Kick-off at Sileby's Fernie Fields ground on Sunday is 3pm.

All-rounder Willey suffers injury setback

CRICKET

NORTHANTS have been hit the news key all-rounder David Willey faces a month on the sidelines with ankle ligament damage.

The 25-year-old suffered the injury during Friday's NatWest T20 Blast game against Worcestershire and he is now expected to be out of action for some time.

It is a blow to both player and team.

Willey has recently established himself as a member of England's rejuvenated one-day side and would be keen to back up those performances with his county.

Meanwhile, Northants are embarking on one of their busiest periods of the season and need all their key players to be fit.

A brief statement from the club said: "David sustained ankle ligament damage in our T20 at New Road.

"(An) MRI showed a low grade strain that will keep him sidelined until the back end off July".

The County are currently in the middle of a four-day LV= Championship match against Lancashire at Old Trafford.

They then return to NatWest T20 Blast action at the weekend when they travel to Chesterfield to take on Derbyshire Falcons.

The Steelbacks go into that game in fourth place in the North Group, having suffered a mixed weekend.

On Friday night they produced a brilliant performance to beat Worcestershire Rapids at New Road by two runs, but on Sunday they were beaten by seven wickets by Notts Outlaws at Trent Bridge.

"I thought we played pretty well," said head coach David Ripley following the Notts loss. "We were well in the game for a 40-over contest.

"It ebbed and flowed a little bit, it was pretty nip and tuck for the majority of it, but that partnership at the end pushed the game their way.

"That meant we came down on the wrong side, but there are a lot of positives from the game."

Notts are now just a point behind the Steelbacks, having claimed their fourth win of the competition.

Northants have never beaten the Outlaws in this form of the game, failing to win any of their six meetings, and Ripley knows Notts are a tough nut to crack.

He said: "They're not in the position in the league where they'd like to be, but they've got a lot of international players, some excellent management and coaches.

"They'll be working hard to get up the table and if they get on a roll, they're not going to be a team people look forward to playing.

"I thought we played pretty well and for the majority of the 40 overs we were in a good position, but they just wrestled it away at the end."

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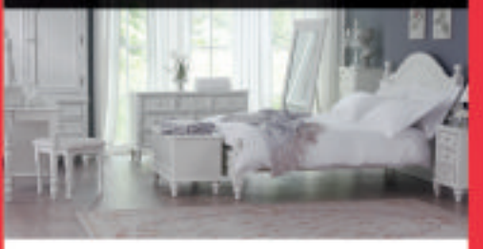

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